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## THE HALL OF THE CHRIST AT CHAUTAUQUA.

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THE central thought of Christianity in this age is Christ—his person, his life, his teaching, the spiritual dispensation which he founded. It has not always been so. Men have exalted doctrine, philosophy, sacraments, ceremonies, priesthoods, ecclesiastical constitutions—everything but Christ himself. Men who study manhood look now to the man of Galilee. Men who study theology seek now “sound words, even the words of the Lord Jesus.”

The critical study of the New Testament tends to exalt its one all-dominating character. And this is well. Men who cannot understand philosophy can understand biography. When they are not able to accept the systematic creed-forms, dogmatically taught by doctors and councils, they are able to hear the wise sayings of the One who walked with his own disciples over the hills and through the valleys of Palestine. They see him on the human side. They study him in the light of ancient life. He is a man again—a teacher, a friend. Approaching him from the human side they are prepared for the deeper, the loftier revelations of the spiritual kingdom for the manifestation of which he became flesh and dwelt among us. More than ever do the scholars turn with delight and enthusiasm to the study of this “great phenomenon.” More than ever the specialists of the biblical schools turn to the study of the Christ as foreshadowed in prophecy, as revealed in history, as reported in literature and glorified in art.

At Chautauqua, Christ and his gospel have constituted the center of all teaching from the first day until the present, and it is now proposed to plant in the center of the Chautauqua grounds, in the midst of all other buildings at this rural university, a temple especially consecrated to the study of his life and

teachings, his relations to the age in which he lived, his influence on the race as developed in successive civilizations and the great schools of thought which have been created or inspired by his presence in the world.

This building is to be called the Hall of the Christ. It is to be a class room for the study of Christ by various grades of pupils, from the little children for whom while on earth he showed such delicate fondness, to the profoundest scholars who may meet to investigate the problems in philosophy, in philology, in literature, in art, in social and political life which are created or illuminated by his marvelous personality and ministry. The building is to be used for no other purpose whatever but to set forth the one idea—the germ and fruition of all great religious ideas—The Christ. Children will be encouraged to take a simple course of reading and study on which they must be examined before their admission as students in the Hall of the Christ, and this to create a greater interest on their part and to emphasize the value of the opportunity to which they are admitted.

A generous philanthropist who is famous for noble gifts and whose name will in due time be announced has made the first contribution of ten thousand dollars toward this project. The Hall of the Christ will occupy one of the most central, eligible and beautiful sites on the Chautauqua grounds. The building will be constructed of substantial material, and will be the most permanent and impressive in appearance of any building in that city by the lake, so solidly constructed that it may last for centuries, and capacious enough to accommodate on special occasions an audience of at least five hundred students.

A room will be set apart for a library of the lives of Jesus and for a selection from the most able discussions which literature furnishes relating to his person, office, work and influence.

Another room will be devoted to a collection of the best engravings and photographs of the great pictures and statues representing Christ—the contributions of the great artists of the ages to the interpretation of his personal character. It is hoped that before long a copy of Thorwaldsen's famous statue of Christ may be placed within the building.

An occasional reverent and beautiful service of worship to the Christ will be held, with all that music and devotional literature and the spontaneity of personal piety may contribute to this end.

The instruction to be given in the Hall of the Christ will be of the most thorough character, prosecuted in the spirit of reverent love, employing the latest results of the most critical study, that students looking eagerly and discriminately into the letter of the four gospels may come more fully and more heartily to appreciate him who spake as never man spake and whose name to this day is above every name.

The Hall standing in the center of the Chautauqua grounds will continually represent the central idea of Christianity and exalt him who was in his earthly life the Friend of the friendless, the Saviour of the sinful and whose gospel and spirit are today the most effective promoters of true social and political reform, and which are daily building up a civilization founded upon the broad doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

It is the aim of the projectors to make the building plain but impressive, Grecian rather than Gothic in style, suggesting as little as possible the "ecclesiastical" and emphasizing the true relation between Nazareth, Jerusalem, Rome and Athens, the alliance between the highest attainable human culture and the holiest personal character that ever shone upon earth, in pursuance of the thought that all culture, all material activity, all science, all philosophy, all literature, all art, all reform, all hope for humanity must center in him.

Another feature of the Hall of the Christ will be the provision of memorial windows and tablets devoted to the memory of departed friends—the Chautauquans of all the years since its founding. These windows designed by a skillful artist will commemorate the various events in the life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension.

In front of the Hall it is expected that there will be a portico, and from it two arms or semi-circular porches will extend enclosing a space in which now and then a large audience may

be convened to listen to addresses or sermons. These architectural "arms" will represent in cenotaphs and statues the great characters of the Old Testament by which the Hebrew people were prepared for the coming of the Christ, while on the opposite side shall be represented in similar fashion the great characters of profane history who were in their times a light unto the world and a preparation for the coming of the Man of Nazareth.

This dream of a building will certainly become a substantial reality. Shall we have a word of suggestion concerning details from Chautauquans and others interested in the plan?



THE CHRIST CHILD.

-MURILLÒ.